

she was, and unfortunately, her family didn't know where she was.

It's a story that we hear all too often, that a loved one is confused with dementia or Alzheimer's can be missing.

And that's why the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program today that we're talking about will help protect our most vulnerable at-risk seniors.

□ 1830

This is a program that has potential, saving and preserving the lives of some of our most vulnerable and threatened elderly citizens. It enlists the capacities of many different agencies, private-public sector. It does not seek to create new agencies. It simply focuses attention and effort on a growing problem.

So, Mr. Speaker, today, I'd like to urge the passage of this measure so we can bring the next Betty Ledgerwood home to her family safely. Thank you so much.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding the time, and the gentlelady, Ms. WATERS from California, for bringing this important legislation.

My father had Alzheimer's and my mother has some form of dementia now. My father passed away at age 80, and there was a day when he disappeared from the nursing home and they couldn't find him. It took a couple of hours. They did find him walking in the neighborhood. He had no idea where he was going. I was amazed that he was not hurt or hit by a car or anything. He obviously had no idea where he was going.

This type of program is so prescient because there are so many people who have been talked about who are either suffering from this illness or will be suffering from this illness, and the needs of the police departments to identify them and to have an opportunity to maintain contact and save them before something bad happens to them.

There was a lady in Memphis named Elizabeth Ferguson. She was 86 years old. In May 2008 she went missing. She suffered from dementia. She drove away from her Memphis home after heading to a doctor's appointment. Her daughter went around and posted signs and tried to find her mother. Seven months later, she was found in a car, 24 miles away from her house. She had died in the elements. Her remains were near the car. She wandered out in some vacant fields.

So this bill is very important to people's lives. I commend Congresswoman WATERS for bringing it. It's the type of activity that sometimes people don't recognize that Congress does to help people in their everyday lives. I thank you for bringing this proposal and for the time offered me.

Mr. POE of Texas. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. I will, Mr. Speaker, say that I can't think of any legislation that is more timely than this, and more needed, to protect our elderly from all sorts of harm. These are people who have worked productively, given their lives, and now have fallen victim to a disease that we are still searching for cures for. And they need special protection, especially as our aged population increases.

And so I look forward to this measure passing, and I want to thank Congresswoman WATERS for her thoughtfulness in producing this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 908.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ELDER ABUSE VICTIMS ACT OF 2009

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 448) to protect seniors in the United States from elder abuse by establishing specialized elder abuse prosecution and research programs and activities to aid victims of elder abuse, to provide training to prosecutors and other law enforcement related to elder abuse prevention and protection, to establish programs that provide for emergency crisis response teams to combat elder abuse, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 448

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Elder Abuse Victims Act of 2009".

#### TITLE I—ELDER ABUSE VICTIMS

#### SEC. 101. ANALYSIS, REPORT, AND RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO ELDER JUSTICE PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations to carry out this section, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall carry out the following:

(1) STUDY.—Conduct a study of laws and practices relating to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, which shall include—

(A) a comprehensive description of State laws and practices relating to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;

(B) a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of such State laws and practices; and

(C) an examination of State laws and practices relating to specific elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation issues, including—

(i) the definition of—

(I) "elder";

(II) "abuse";

(III) "neglect";

(IV) "exploitation"; and

(V) such related terms the Attorney General determines to be appropriate;

(ii) mandatory reporting laws, with respect to—

(I) who is a mandated reporter;

(II) to whom must they report and within what time frame; and

(III) any consequences for not reporting;

(iii) evidentiary, procedural, sentencing, choice of remedies, and data retention issues relating to pursuing cases relating to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;

(iv) laws requiring reporting of all nursing home deaths to the county coroner or to some other individual or entity;

(v) fiduciary laws, including guardianship and power of attorney laws;

(vi) laws that permit or encourage banks and bank employees to prevent and report suspected elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;

(vii) laws relating to fraud and related activities in connection with mail, telemarketing, or the Internet;

(viii) laws that may impede research on elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;

(ix) practices relating to the enforcement of laws relating to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation; and

(x) practices relating to other aspects of elder justice.

(2) DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN.—Develop objectives, priorities, policies, and a long-term plan for elder justice programs and activities relating to—

(A) prevention and detection of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;

(B) intervention and treatment for victims of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;

(C) training, evaluation, and research related to elder justice programs and activities; and

(D) improvement of the elder justice system in the United States.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, submit to the chairman and ranking member of the Special Committee on Aging of the Senate, and the Speaker and minority leader of the House of Representatives, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and make available to the States, a report that contains—

(A) the findings of the study conducted under paragraph (1);

(B) a description of the objectives, priorities, policies, and a long-term plan developed under paragraph (2); and

(C) a list, description, and analysis of the best practices used by States to develop, implement, maintain, and improve elder justice systems, based on such findings.

(b) GAO RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall review existing Federal programs and initiatives in the Federal criminal justice system relevant to elder justice and shall submit to Congress—

(1) a report on such programs and initiatives; and

(2) any recommendations the Comptroller General determines are appropriate to improve elder justice in the United States.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$6,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009 through 2015.

#### SEC. 102. VICTIM ADVOCACY GRANTS.

(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General, after consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, may award grants to eligible entities to study the special needs of victims of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.